REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Priority Claim

The priority of this application was amended January 22, 2003, to claim priority to U.S.S.N. 09/699,003 filed October 26, 2000, which is a continuation of U.S.S.N. 09/316,226 filed May 21, 1999, now U.S. Patent No. 6,231,536, which claims priority to U.S.S.N. 09/083,307 filed May 22, 1998, and to U.S.S.N. 60/164,695 filed November 10, 1999.

Although the examiner has not requested an amended declaration of inventorship, applicant is submitting under separate cover an amended declaration explicitly claiming priority to the earlier applications.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 1-3, 6, 8-11, and 17-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. This rejection is rendered moot by cancellation of these claims.

Interference with U.S. Patent No. 6,379,708 to Howell, et al.

As discussed with the examiner, it is believed this application should be placed in an interference with U.S. Patent No. 6,379,708 to Howell, et al. To facilitate declaration of an interference, claims 1-22 have been cancelled and replaced with new claims 23-41.

Set forth below is a claim chart showing the written description for claims 23-41 of the present application in the specification of that application.

Claim	Specification
23. A method of enhancing an immune response in a patient having soluble cytokine receptor molecules in the blood which inhibit the immune response, the method comprising:	Page 1, lines 6-7
(a) obtaining whole blood from the patient;	Page 18, lines 4-8
(b) separating plasma from the blood;	Page 18, lines 6-8.
(c) contacting the plasma with at least one cytokine receptor inhibitor selected from the group consisting of antibodies or antibody fragments binding to soluble cytokine receptor molecules, and cytokine molecules and epitopes thereof binding to soluble cytokine receptor molecules;	Page 6, lines 13-20; page 18, lines 8-11
(d) removing soluble cytokine receptor molecules bound to the cytokine receptor inhibitor from the plasma; and	Page 6, lines 13-20; page 18, lines 8-18
(e) returning the plasma from which the soluble cytokine receptor molecules have been removed to the patient.	Page 18, lines 12-15
24. The method of claim 23, wherein the cytokine receptor inhibitor is immobilized in a solid support or membrane.	Page 6, line 15 and page 9, line 4
25. The method of claim 23, wherein the antibodies are recombinant.	Page 6, lines 18-20
26. The method of claim 23, wherein the antibodies are in a mixture of antibodies immunoreactive with the soluble cytokine receptor molecules.	Page 6, lines 14-18
27. The method of claim 23, wherein the patient is human.	Page 6, line 26

28. The method of claim 23, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor is selected from the group consisting of soluble receptors for tumor necrosis factors alpha and beta.	Page 3, lines 14-17
29. The method of claim 23, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor molecule is a TNF receptor.	Page 9, lines 19-20
30. The method of claim 23, wherein the antibodies or antibody fragments are monoclonal.	Page 6, line 27
31. The method of claim 23, wherein the monoclonal antibodies or antibody fragments are recombinant.	Page 6, lines 18-20
32. The method of claim 23, wherein the plasma is contacted with antibodies or antibody fragments.	Page 6, lines 18-20
33. The method of claim 23, wherein the plasma is contacted with polyclonal antibodies or antibody fragments.	Page 6, line 27
34. The method of claim 23, wherein the plasma is contacted with monoclonal antibodies or antibody fragments.	Page 6, line 27
35. The method of claim 23, wherein the plasma is contacted with the cytokines or cytokine epitopes.	Page 6, lines 13-14
36. The method of claim 34, wherein the monoclonal antibodies or antibody fragments are recombinant.	Page 6, lines 18-20
37. The method of claim 23, wherein the blood is separated into plasma by filtration.	Page 6, line 15; page 12, line 12 to page 13, line 2; and page 18, lines 4-8
38. The method of claim 37, wherein the filtration is ultrafiltration.	Page 12, line 12 to page 13, line 2; and page 18, lines 4-8
40. The method of claim 23,	Page 18, lines 21-24

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wherein the method is repeated.

A Suggestion for an Interference is being filed concurrently with this amendment.

Submitted concurrently with this amendment is a 37 C.F.R. 41.202 SUGGESTION OF AN INTERFERENCE. Please note that Supplemental Information Disclosure Statements were filed on April 28, 2005 and February 11, 2005, to cite additional prior art that was considered during the prosecution of U.S. Patent No. 6,379,708 to Howell, et al.

Please contact the undersigned by telephone if anything further is required.

Respectfully submitted,

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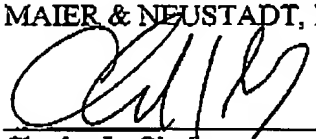

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